



# PERS Plan 1 Rules for Governor Appointed Officials

## Washington State Department of Retirement Systems

The following rules apply to governor appointed officials who choose to be covered by PERS Plan 1 while in office. Additional rules governing all PERS Plan 1 members are summarized in the PERS Plan 1 Member Handbook.

### **You are eligible to participate in PERS Plan 1 while in office if:**

- You were appointed to office directly by the Governor, your appointment was confirmed by the legislature, and you are either
- A PERS Plan 1 member when appointed to office, or
- A former PERS Plan 1 member (even if you withdrew your funds from your retirement account).

If you would like to be a member while in office, you must apply to the Department of Retirement Systems, however, you are not required to be a retirement system member.

### **When can I apply for membership?**

**During your initial term:** You may apply for membership at any time during your initial term of office. If you enter membership after your initial term of office has begun, you must retroactively pay employee and employer contributions plus interest dating back to the first day of your initial term.

**During a following term:** If you do not apply for membership during your first term in office, you may apply during a following term. Membership will be granted retroactively to the first day of the term of office in which you apply for membership. You must pay member contributions and interest back to the first day of the term in which you apply for membership.

If you have been appointed by the Governor to a position that does not have a set term of office, your "current term of office" includes all uninterrupted service beginning with the first day of your current appointment.

**Your membership decision is final:** Once you have established retirement system membership, you must remain a member until you separate from all eligible public employment.

If you serve an additional term of office with the same employer without a break in service, you will remain a retirement system member.

### **How do I earn service credit?**

The amount of your retirement benefit is determined in part by the amount of service credit you accumulate. As a Governor-appointed official you earn service credit as follows.

**For service prior to July 1, 1976,** you earn one month of service credit for each month in which you were compensated.

**For service after July 1, 1976,** you receive one month of service credit for each month during which you earn at least 70 hours of compensation.

**For service after September 1, 1991,** you receive one quarter month of service credit for each month during which you are compensated for less than 70 total hours of work.

# **PERS Plan 1 Rules for Governor Appointed Officials (continued)**

## **Washington State Department of Retirement Systems**

### **Can I receive credit for past Governor-appointed service?**

Governor-appointed officials are not eligible to purchase service credit for previous terms of governor-appointed service.

### **How much will my retirement benefit be?**

The amount you will receive for a service retirement benefit is based on the formula:

$$2 \text{ percent} \times \text{years of service credit} \times \text{Average Final Compensation} = \text{Monthly benefit}$$

Average Final Compensation is the monthly average of your 24 consecutive highest-paid service credit months.

### **How much will I contribute to my retirement fund?**

As a PERS 1 nonelected official you will contribute 6% of your “compensation earnable” each month to your retirement plan. Compensation earnable is the salary and wages you earn during a payroll period for service rendered.

### **What if I am a retired PERS Plan 1 member when appointed?**

If you are a retired PERS Plan 1 member who is appointed to office by the Governor, you have the option of remaining retired and continuing to receive your retirement allowance while serving in office, or returning to active member status while serving in office.

If you return to active member status, you will stop receiving a monthly retirement benefit, and you will resume making contributions to your retirement system and accumulating service credit. Any retirement benefit you receive during your current term must be repaid.

### **How Do I Enroll?**

To continue or reestablish PERS Plan 1 membership, contact DRS and provide the following information:

- Name
- Social Security Number
- Address and phone number
- Position title and employer
- Beginning and ending dates of all elected official service

DRS will verify your service and send you an enrollment letter and application.

### **You can write DRS at:**

Department of Retirement Systems  
PO Box 48380  
Olympia, WA 98504-8380

## **PERS Plan 1 Rules for Governor Appointed Officials (continued)**

### **Washington State Department of Retirement Systems**

#### **Questions?**

To discuss the application of these rules to your specific case, call the DRS Central Reception Desk and ask to speak to the Legal and Legislative Services Unit.

DRS' **central telephone number** is toll-free 1-800-547-6657 or locally (360) 664-7000.

**Office hours** are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays

#### **THIS PUBLICATION IS A SUMMARY**

This brochure does not contain a complete description of the law. If there are conflicts between the information contained in this brochure and retirement law, the applicable law will govern.

This publication is available in alternate formats. For information contact DRS Member Publications at (360) 664-7278.